

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending, of which claims 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24 and 25 have been deemed to contain allowable subject matter but objected to, and claims 1-8, 11, 14, 17, 20 and 23 have been rejected. Applicant has now amended claim 1 and respectfully submits and claims 1-25 are in condition for allowance, as set forth more fully below.

Correction of Correspondence Address and For New Deadline for Reply

Applicant wishes to bring to the Examiner's attention that communications, including Office Actions, from the Office have been consistently mailed to a wrong party, thereby causing undue delays of Applicant's receipt of those communications. Applicant is filing a new Change of Correspondence Address concurrently with the present Amendment and respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the pending Office Action and issue a Office Action setting a new Shortened Statutory Period for reply in light of the following facts:

- (1) On 21 November 2006, Applicant filed a "Revocation of Power of Attorney with New Power of Attorney and Change of Correspondence Address" with the USPTO. The filing specified that Merchant & Gould patent attorneys were to have the power of attorney and the correspondence address was to be changed to Merchant & Gould.
- (2) On 05 December 2006, Merchant & Gould was granted the power of attorney as requested.
- (3) On 26 April 2007, an office action was issued, but mailed to an Atochem Patent Department in France.
- (4) On 30 May 2007, Applicant sent a Communication to the USPTO, alerting it of the erroneous mailing of the office action and referring them to the power of attorney grant, which had the correct address.

(5) Despite the above, the pending Office Action was again mailed to Atochem Patent Department. As a result, Applicant did not become aware of the existence of the pending Office Action, which was mailed on January 3, 2008, until about March 13, 2008, more than two months after the mailing date of the Office Action.

In light of the above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the pending Office Action and issue a new Office Action with a reply deadline of at least two months beyond the Shortened Statutory Period for Reply, to June 3, 2008.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C 102(b) as being anticipated by the newly cited reference, *Hendel* (U.S. Patent No. 5,920,566). Applicant respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration in light of the amendment to claim 1.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the phrase "designated by a user" to modify the multicast message forwarding rule. The amendment is supported at least at the first paragraph of the section "Detailed Description of the Embodiment" in the originally filed specification. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Hendel, in contrast, neither discloses nor suggests a multicast message forwarding rule designated by a user and thus does not anticipate claim 1. Applicant therefore respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Claims 2-8, 11, 14, 17, 20 and 23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hendel* in view of the newly cited *Pitcher* reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,370,142). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections in light of the amendment to claim 1, on which each of claims 2-8, 11, 14, 17, 20 and 23 ultimately depends, and the following arguments.

First, the ultimate base claim, claim 1, for the claims rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) includes the feature of "the forwarding match condition specifying a multicast message

forwarding rule designated by a user for multicast message". As discussed above, *Hendel* fails to disclose or suggest this feature. *Pitcher* likewise fails to disclose or suggest this feature. Thus, even if *Hendel* and *Pitcher* could be legitimately combined as the Examiner suggests, the combination would still fail to disclose every limitation of claim 1. Claim 1 is therefore not obvious in light of the cited references. See, *MPEP* 2143.3.

Each of claims 2-8, 11, 14, 17, 20 and 23, being ultimately dependent on claim 1, includes additional features and advantages, and is therefore also un-obvious in light of the cited references.

Furthermore, the invention claimed in the present application offers advantages that are not obvious in light of the cited references. As explained in, for example, the first paragraph of the section "Detailed Description of the Embodiment" in the originally filed specification, with the user-designated multicast message forwarding rule the claimed invention "enables users to flexibly configure the multicast message forwarding rule according to requirement during networking." The user that designates the multicast message forwarding rule may be, for example, a service provider or a network administrator on one side of the network device (router), who wants to prevent a certain multicast message from being transmitted to a certain host. The user in this regard is different from the user of the host that is on the other side of the network device and may also be referred to as a subscriber.

With the multicast message forwarding rule being designated by the user according to the solution as claimed in amended claim 1, a certain multicast message can be transmitted to only a specified host and prevented from being transmitted to another host, i.e., a certain packet can be prevented from being transmitted to all hosts, thus enhancing the security of multicast message forwarding. Accordingly, configuration of the multicast network may be made simpler, bandwidth resources may be saved and forwarding efficiency of the routers may be increased.

In contrast, *Hendel* explicitly discloses that packets are relayed by a multi-layer distributed network element according to known routing protocols (see the abstract) and the method for relaying packet comprises determining whether the packet should be forwarded in accordance with a routing protocol (see claim 1). Especially in col. 11 lines 20-23 and lines 40-42, *Hendel* discloses that the routing protocols used to derive the type 2 entries (i.e. forwarding conditions used to determine if the message is a unicast or multicast message and also whether the multicast message should be forwarded, as admitted by the Examiner) include protocols such as MOSPF and DVMRP which are well known in the art, and the matching type 2 entry for the multicast case may be created as a result of executing a multicast registration protocol such as IGMP.

Thus, as is readily recognizable by those skilled in the art, the multicast message forwarding rule being designated by the user according to the solution as claimed in amended claim 1 is completely different from that created as a result of executing a known routing protocol.

In fact, as already mentioned in the originally filed specification of the pending application (for example page 4, lines 14-15, and lines 23-25), the configuration including the multicast message forwarding rule being designated by the user can replace functions of IGMP and the multicast routing protocol, and the method thereof can be both an independent mode of forwarding multicast message and an extension to the conventional mode of forwarding multicast message. This fact further indicates the difference between the multicast message forwarding rule being designated by the user according to the claimed solution and that created as a result of executing a known routing protocol.

At the same time, *Pitcher* also fails to fill the gap between *Hendel* and the invention claimed in the present application, as *Pitcher* neither discloses nor suggests a multicast message forwarding rule designated by a user as defined in amended claim 1.

Due to the significant difference mentioned above between the features of the amended

claim 1 as well as its dependent claims one the one hand, and those disclosed in the cited references on the other, the claimed invention is qualitatively more than the predictable use of known elements in *Hendel and Pitcher* according to their established functions.

For at least these reasons, Applicant therefore respectfully requests the withdrawal of the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on the cited references.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24 and 25 have been objected as being dependent on a rejected base claim. Applicant respectfully submits that because claim 1, as amended, is not allowable, the objected-to claims are also now allowable. Applicant therefore respectfully requests the withdrawal of the objections to claims 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24 and 25.

SUMMARY

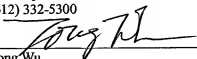
In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,



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